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### **PRESS RELEASE**

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Maps show Tennessee River flows through Georgia

# **Boundary Line Commission Resolution receives nod from Senate Committee**



ATLANTA – Legislation sponsored by Sen. David Shafer (R-Duluth) to create boundary line commissions to survey and mark Georgia's northern border at the 35<sup>th</sup> parallel received a unanimous “do pass” recommendation of the Senate Rules Committee.

“This resolution does not change Georgia's borders,” Sen. Shafer said. “Both federal and state law recognizes the 35<sup>th</sup> parallel as

Georgia's northern border. This resolution simply calls for the border to be accurately surveyed and correctly marked.”

An 1818 survey erroneously marked the Georgia-Tennessee border 1.1 miles south of the parallel, but Sen. Shafer said that neither the Georgia General Assembly nor the United States Congress ever accepted the erroneous boundary line. “In fact,” he says, “current Georgia law continues to define the state’s northern border at the 35<sup>th</sup> parallel.

“The U.S. Constitution is clear,” the Senator said. “The boundaries of states can be changed only if the legislatures of the affected states and the United States Congress agree. Not only has the Georgia General Assembly never agreed to the 1818 survey, it has repeatedly objected to it.”

Sen. Shafer said it was important that this issue be settled now because of concern that Tennessee may attempt to “hoard” the water in the Tennessee River. He then pointed out that the Tennessee River is fed by streams and creeks originating in Georgia and that there is more Georgia water in the Tennessee River than in our own Chattahoochee.

The Tennessee River, which has over 15 times the flow of the Chattahoochee River, receives more than six percent of its water from Georgia.

During the Senate Rules Committee meeting, Sen. Shafer distributed maps from 1813 and 1816 showing Georgia's borders at the 35<sup>th</sup> parallel and clearly encompassing the Tennessee River to his fellow Senators. He also presented modern satellite photos showing both the Tennessee River and the entire Nickajack Reservoir south of the 35<sup>th</sup> parallel within the state of Georgia.

Sen. Shafer said that he believes resolution of the border issue will open the way to discussions about water sharing.

Senate Resolution 822 creates Georgia-Tennessee and Georgia-North Carolina Border Line Commissions, and Sen. Shafer said he is hopeful that, once the resolution passes both Houses of the Georgia legislature, “our friends in Tennessee will work with us, at long last, to resolve this issue.”

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*Senator David Shafer is Chairman of the Senate Regulated Industries and Utilities Committee. He represents the 48th Senate District which includes parts of Fulton and Gwinnett Counties. He may be reached at 404-656-0048 or via email at [David.Shafer@senate.ga.gov](mailto:David.Shafer@senate.ga.gov).*